

Chapter No. 2100

15/SS02/R308

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 508***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 508

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING OF FORMER FIRST LADY CARROLL OVERTON WALLER AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, former Mississippi First Lady Ava Carroll Overton Waller, 87, of Jackson, passed away on October 28. Almost 43 years ago Carroll Waller became First Lady of the great State of Mississippi, and what a grand First Lady she was. Her quick wit, Southern charm and infectious personality made her the consummate First Lady; and

WHEREAS, Carroll Waller was the widow of former Mississippi Governor William L. (Bill) Waller. They were married for 61 years; and

WHEREAS, the former Mississippi First Lady leaves a legacy of historic preservation. She spearheaded efforts to restore the Governor's Mansion. The executive residence, built in 1842, had fallen into such disrepair that former Governor John Bell Williams and his family moved out in 1971. During Governor Waller's term in office from 1972-1976, Carroll Waller led efforts for the

architecturally correct restoration of the Governor's Mansion and the construction of the neoclassical gardens which surround the Mansion. Although the Waller family lived in the executive residence for only a few months, their efforts preserved the landmark for the enjoyment of future generations. Carroll Waller spearheaded efforts to have the Mansion designated a National Historical Landmark, which was the second executive residence in the nation so designated. She also provided leadership for the purchase and restoration of the historic Manship House in Jackson. For these projects, she received an Award of Merit from the Mississippi Historical Society in 1980. Carroll and Dr. David Sansing co-authored the book, *The History of the Mississippi Governor's Mansion*, with the proceeds used for the upkeep of the Governor's Mansion; and

WHEREAS, as First Lady, Carroll was also instrumental in securing passage of legislation which designated Mississippi's state animal as the white-tailed deer; a state fish, the largemouth bass; a state water mammal, the porpoise; a state seashell, the oyster; and a state waterfowl, the wood duck. At her request, a beautiful red rose known as the Mississippi Rose was hybridized for the state. The Carroll Waller Camellia was hybridized especially for her. These and native plants of distinction are part of the landscape of the Mansion grounds; and

WHEREAS, she gave leadership to the creation of a learning resources system in the Department of Education, including

provisions for the evaluation of all children suspected of having learning disabilities. She served as National Library Week Chairman and sponsored the Mississippi Library Commission's bicentennial project, the collecting of autographed books by Mississippi authors for the Mansion. She served as chairman for numerous organizations across the state. Her service included two five-year terms on the Mississippi Arts Commission, Keep Mississippi Beautiful Committee, Board of the Municipal Art Gallery, the Board of the Mississippi Historical Society, the Board of Bookfriends of the *University Press*, and Regent of the D.A.R. Rebecca Cravat Chapter of Jackson. She was a former member of the Board of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission and the Board for Christian Conciliation Service; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, she received the Centennial Award of Excellence from Blue Mountain College. Mississippi College awarded her the Service to Humanity Award in 1976, an Honorary Doctorate Degree in 1978, and the Order of the Golden Arrow in 1980; and

WHEREAS, Carroll Waller was born in McComb, Mississippi, on August 8, 1927, to the late Dr. Clayton Justice Overton and Edith Watkins Overton. She graduated from Central High School in Jackson, and from Mississippi College, with distinction. She was an Instructor at Belhaven College and a Sales Associate at the House of Overton, her mother's dress shop, until devoting her full-time attention to her growing family and the political career

of her husband. Carroll was a third-generation member of First Baptist Church, Jackson. It was there she met her future husband. She was a member of the Hope and Joy Sunday School Class for almost 60 years. She also served as President of the Women's Missionary Union and the Ava Burton Watkins Circle; and

WHEREAS, she is survived by her four sons and 14 grandchildren. Her children and grandchildren include: Chief Justice William L. Waller, Jr., and his wife, Charlotte, of Jackson, and their three children, William L. Waller III, M.D., Jeannie (Jon) Zieren and Clayton J. Waller; Robert O. Waller and his wife, Margaret, of Jackson, and their six children, Joy Waller, Robert O. Waller, Jr., Madeline Waller, Millie Waller, Ava Burton Waller and Maggie Waller; Edward C. Waller and his wife, Bae, of Jackson, and their two daughters, Emma Carroll Waller and Dannie Waller; Donald E. Waller and his wife, Yonnie, of Jackson, and their three children, Anne Overton Waller, Lucy Waller and Don Waller, Jr.; and her two sisters, Joy Overton Holmes of Madison, Mississippi, and Gloria Overton Martin of Madison, Florida; and

WHEREAS, Carroll was gracious and fair, was a joy and she will be missed. It is with great pride that we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of this most public spirited citizen of Mississippi whose enormous civic energy is a model for all:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That

we do hereby mourn the passing of former First Lady Carroll Overton Waller and express the sympathy of the Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Chief Justice William L. Waller, Jr., representing the surviving family, forwarded to the Governor of the State of Mississippi, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 8, 2015



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 14, 2015



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES